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Letter dated 10 November 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write, on behalf of the African Group of States at the United Nations, to convey the deepest regrets of the Group over the tragic events that have occurred in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire, since 4 November 2004.

The African Group notes with satisfaction the timely action taken by the Security Council along with the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, to defuse tensions and relaunch the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

The African Group is convinced that the ongoing African Union high-level diplomatic initiative, under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, offers the best chance of containing the crisis and putting the peace process back on track.

The African Group therefore views the proposed Council resolution, the objective of which is to impose punitive measures against Côte d'Ivoire, with concern and apprehension. It is the position of the African Group that this approach is incompatible with the African Union's current strategy of engagement with all the parties concerned.

In this connection and bearing in mind the positive results already achieved from the high-level initiative of the African Union, the African Group wishes to appeal to the members of the Council to reconsider their proposal and allow more time for the ongoing efforts of the African Union to come to fruition.

The African Group is convinced that the spirit of cooperation and partnership that has always guided the Council in its dealings with the African Group over similar situations in Africa will prevail in the case of Côte d'Ivoire.

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council and facilitate its circulation as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Crispin **Grey-Johnson**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
Chairman of the African Group

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